

Godward Submission in the Workplace part 3  
Excursus on Isaiah 52:13-53:12 part 2  
(Isaiah 53:7-12)

Introduction: This is the portion of Scripture the Ethiopian eunuch was reading when God brought Philip to him (Acts 8:32-33).

- 1) Messiah's suffering—53:7-9
  - a) Messiah demonstrates silent submission in the face of suffering—53:7
    - i) Messiah's harsh treatment
      - (1) <sup>7</sup> *He was oppressed*
        - (a) He was not a victim of blind fate or destiny, but willingly gave Himself to suffering at the hands of sinners
      - (2) *and He was afflicted*
        - (a) Perhaps "and He was humbling Himself"
    - ii) Messiah's non-defensive, submissive response
      - (1) *yet He did not open His mouth, like a sheep is led to the slaughter,*
        - (a) Unlike the naïve sheep who goes ignorantly, Jesus went with full knowledge, willingly submitting to the eternal purpose of the Father.
      - (2) *and like a ewe before its shearers is silent, so He did not open not His mouth.*
        - (a) Rather than verbally attack His oppressors, He trusted in God for His vindication.
  - b) Messiah faces injustice and misunderstanding leading to death—53:8
    - i) His legal situation—<sup>8</sup> *He was taken away (to death) from oppression (custody) and from judgment;*
      - (1) Hurriedly removed from His unjust legal and judicial proceedings
    - ii) *and who of His generation considered this?*
      - This is perhaps the most difficult phrase in interpreting this section
      - None of Messiah's contemporaries paid much attention to His unjust treatment
      - (1) *Indeed He was cut off from the land of the living;*
        - (a) Dying a violent "premature death", an execution, by the world's standards it was evidence of wrong doing
      - (2) *for the rebellion [pasha`] of my people (Israel) He was stricken .*
        - (a) Not viewed as an innocent victim suffering unfortunately, but rather He deliberately suffers in the place of those who should be suffering the consequences of their rebellion; He dies the death they should be dying.
  - c) The innocent Messiah is buried—53:9
    - i) The enigma of His burial
      - (1) Human intention—<sup>9</sup> *And one assigned His grave with the wicked/criminals [rasha`],*

- (a) See John 19:31
  - (2) God's providential intervention—*but with a rich man in His death*,
    - (a) Literally “in His deaths”, emphasizing the violent intensity of His death
  - ii) The cause of His burial
    - (1) No sinful actions—*although He had done no violence*,
    - (2) No sinful speech—*and there was no deceit in His mouth*.
  - iii) Fulfilled at Christ's death and burial in Matthew 27:38, 44, 57-60
- 2) Messiah's exaltation—53:10-12
  - a) The pleasure of the Father—53:10
    - i) What did Yahweh do?—53:10a
      - (1) <sup>10</sup> *Yet Yahweh was **pleased** to crush Him;*
        - (a) Remember 53:5-6. See also Acts 2:23; 4:27-28; Revelation 13:8
        - (b) Everything that happened to the Son was a result of the Father's will. It was not simply a tragic, preventable accident.
        - (c) Then why is sinful man held responsible?
          - (i) Because of ignorance—they do not know His will
          - (ii) Because of unwillingness—they do not want to obey His will
          - (iii) Because of choice—God did not force them to do His will
      - (2) *He (Father) made Him (Son) suffer;*
        - (a) To suffer in Israel's place, who had violated the covenant God made with them
    - ii) But mere suffering was not the end goal—53:10b
      - (1) What did the Father do? He made an atoning sacrifice
        - (a) *if He (Father) makes His (Son) soul an offering for guilt,...*
        - (b) The offering that removes guilt and makes restitution/restoration—Leviticus 5:7, 15
        - (c) This is what makes all the suffering of the Messiah worthwhile.
      - (2) What was the Father's purpose? Contrasts with the seeming bleakness of 53:8-9
        - *Then...*
          - (a) *He (Father) will see His (Son) offspring;*
            - (i) The seed promised in God's covenant with Abraham
          - (b) *He (Father) will prolong His (Son) days,*
          - (c) *and the **pleasure** of Yahweh (Father) will prosper in His (Son) hand.*
  - b) The satisfying work of Messiah—53:11
    - i) His labor—<sup>11</sup> *From (because of) the labor of his soul ...—53:11a*
      - (1) Certainty—*He will see*,
      - (2) Contentment—*He will be satisfied;* (with what He sees)

- ii) His knowledge—*by His knowledge...*—53:11b (of His suffering in 53:3)
  - (1) Justification—*My righteous Servant will account the many as righteous,*
    - (a) The righteous One, My Servant, will acquit them.
    - (b) His innocence furnishes a basis for His substitution.
  - (2) Substitution atonement—*and their iniquities* [emphatic] *He will bear.*
    - (a) Covenantal law demands punishment for violating the covenant. God's justice must be satisfied. To satisfy His justice, He does something seemingly unjust. He punishes His sinless servant, the only One who has not strayed off.... What appears to be an act of injustice is really love satisfying the demands of justice.
- c) The rewards of Yahweh—53:12 <sup>12</sup> *Therefore...* (in light of 53:11)
  - i) What is the nature of the reward?—53:12a
    - (1) *I (Father) will divide to Him (Son) a portion with the many,*
      - (a) As a conqueror
    - (2) *and He will divide the spoil with the strong,*
      - (a) The Son will share gifts with others.
  - ii) What is the cause of the reward?—53:12b
    - (1) Identification in the conflict
      - (a) *Because He poured out His soul to death*
        - (i) Denying all natural instincts for survival
      - (b) *and was numbered with the rebels;*
        - (i) See Luke 22:37
    - (2) Distinction in the conquest—Messiah is exalted because He fulfilled the Father's purpose of redemption
      - (a) *yet He* [emphatic] *carried the sin of many,*
        - (i) He didn't chase them away, He carried them.
        - (ii) The "many" referred to in 53:11, i.e. all that believe in Him.
      - (b) *and intervenes for the rebels.*
        - (i) There was no one to step into the gap for the rebels and their just destruction, so the Servant did it with his own blood.
- 3) Looking back:
  - a) Learn well the exceeding **sinfulness** of your sin, the exceeding **awesome** of His wrath, and the exceeding **greatness** of His grace and love. Marvel not at the mystery of His suffering, but rather how God could love us like this.
  - b) In your work situation:
    - i) We may suffer at work, but we do so under the Father's sovereign hand
    - ii) Suffering unjust treatment at work must be done actively and not passively
    - iii) Our speech is one indicator of what is taking place in our heart
    - iv) God's rewards for our Godward obedience will come in His time

**Take-home truth:** Godward suffering receives Godward rewards